

## One Size Fits None: What's the Right ePortfolio for You?

Assessment Institute ePortfolio  
Keynote: October 2008  
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## Goals of the Keynote

- Goals
  - Ensure the program description is met!
- Questions
  - What are the implications of the new federal regulations for assessing student learning?
  - What role(s) might ePortfolios play?
  - What does that mean for each of you and for all of you in this room?

## One Size Fits None: Definitions

The more crucial a concept is to an issue, discussion, or discipline, the more resistant it becomes to definition (Lee Shulman).

We define key concepts to mean what we want them or need them to mean. Changing circumstances create evolving definitions.

In dynamic circumstances, definitions quickly become more historical than regulatory.

## Getting on the same page through definition of features (maybe)

- University of Edinburgh (2008 website)
  - Organized assortment of work
  - Composed of digitized objects
  - Providing an authentic record
  - Connected to an individual's status
  - Linked to learning
- NLII (2003 power point presentation)
  - A collection of authentic and diverse evidence drawn from a larger archive
  - Representing what a person or organization has learned over time and on which the person or organization has reflected
  - Designed for presentation to one or more audiences for a particular rhetorical purpose

## Getting on the same page (crucial connections)

- University of Edinburgh (2008)
  - Organized **assortment of work**
  - Composed of digitized objects
  - Providing an **authentic record**
  - Connected to an individual's status
  - **Linked to learning**
- NLII (2003)
  - A collection of **authentic** and **diverse evidence** drawn from a larger archive
  - Representing what a person or organization has **learned over time** and on which the person or organization has reflected
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## Salient Differences (perceived)

- University of Edinburgh (2008 website)
  - Organized assortment of work
  - Composed of digitized objects
  - Providing an authentic record
  - Connected to an **individual's** status
  - Linked to learning
- NLII (2003 power point presentation)
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## Catalytic Circumstances (Historical)

- External
  - Spellings Commission
  - Accreditation
  - Policy/law (system; state; region; national)
  - Cultural norms (local, regional, national)
  - Availability of grant funding
    - Title 3 grants for technology to support learning
    - Pew Charitable Trust, FIPSE, Lumina, etc. to support development of ePortfolios
- Internal
  - Program Review
  - Curricular/Co-curricular Policies/Change
  - Pedagogical (enhance student learning)

## Catalytic Policies and Cultural Norms in Europe (a couple of examples)

- UK: Personal Development Plan
- UK: 500,000 qualifications (NVQs) given to people who have built a portfolio (many electronic using an ePortfolio Management System platform) to have their learning recognized
- Netherlands (Dutch Labour Market Recommendations): Every member of the labour force will be entitled to a digital e-portfolio, i.e. an electronic inventory of their competencies, diplomas, experience, and prior learning

## Catalytic Circumstances in the US

- Accreditation focus on assessment of student learning outcomes
- Federal government focus on accountability
- Student focus on electronic communication/social networking
- Employer skepticism of college achievement
- Higher Education Opportunity Act (August 2008)

## 2008: Higher Education Opportunity Act (August 14, 2008)

- Significant changes in eight accreditation-related areas, including student achievement
  - Colleges and universities (not government) have primary responsibility for student achievement
  - Success in student achievement may include different standards for different institutions or programs, as established by each institution
- Relationship between institution and accrediting bodies
  - Institutions set expectations for student achievement
  - Accrediting agencies hold institutions accountable for
    - Appropriate level of standards and expectations
    - Evidence that expectations have been met

## Implications of Higher Education Opportunity Act for ePortfolios

- First time federal law has affirmed that universities and colleges have primary responsibility for student achievement
- Implications for institutional standards and learning outcomes?
- Implications for multi-institutional assessment?
- Implications for what kind of ePortfolio you would like to develop on your campus

## Institutional Standards and Learning Outcomes

- Essential curricular conversations prior to selecting an ePortfolio infrastructure
- Relationship of general education learning outcomes to disciplinary and professional major learning outcomes
- Clear and consensual articulation of how you would like your selected ePortfolio system to support your curricular and co-curricular goals

## Multi-Institutional Assessment

- VSA: Voluntary System of Accountability (AASCU & NASULGC)
  - Demonstrate accountability and stewardship to public
  - Measure educational outcomes to identify effective educational practices
  - Assemble information that is accessible, understandable, and comparable
- Standardized tests (e.g. CLA)
- VALUE: Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education (AAC&U)

## VALUE

- Developing national indicators or rubrics that reflect shared learning expectations, based on actual work of students
- Builds on work of faculty who developed assessment rubrics for Essential Learning Outcomes
- Integrates curricular and co-curricular learning
- Uses ePortfolios as a key technological tool.

## Shaping (y)our destiny

- Does the 8/14/08 legislation obviate the need for multi-institutional assessment?
- What do you envision as the ideal place to be in terms of assessing student learning 5 years from now?
- How might ePortfolios help us to reach that place?

## Back to definitions

- "The implementation of electronic portfolios is changing the very definition of 'portfolio' from past practice" (Helen C. Barrett)
- "Many electronic portfolio systems involve numerical scoring of artifacts against a rubric, with statistical analysis available to aggregate data collected." (Barrett)

## "Dangers of Portfolios"

(Lee Shulman)

- **Lamination**: exhibition; self advertisement
- **Heavy lifting**: hard work; faculty/student time; expensive
- **Trivialization**: documenting stuff not worth reflecting upon
- **Misrepresentation**: best work vs. typical work as measure of competence
- **Perversion**: assessment issue

## Potential for Perversion

(Lee Shulman)

- "If portfolios are going to be used (at the state or national level) as a form of high stakes assessment, why will portfolios be more resistant to perversion than all other forms of assessment have been? And if one of the requirements...is that you develop a sufficiently objective scoring system so you can fairly compare people, will your scoring system end up objectifying what is in the portfolio to the point where the portfolio will be nothing but a very, very cumbersome multiple-choice test?"

## Resisting “Perversion”

- **Connecting** individual episodes of learning with larger, more global learning outcomes
  - Reflective thinking
  - Folio thinking
  - Matrix thinking
- **Connecting** process and product
- **Connecting** formative and summative assessments of learning
- **Connecting** student authorship and ownership with institutional needs for accountability

## ePortfolios & Online Assessment Management Systems (AMS)

	Electronic Portfolio	AMS
<b>Purpose</b>	Multiple: Learning, Assessment, Career	Single: Formative & Summative Assessment
<b>Locus of Control</b>	Student-Centered	Institution-centered
<b>Data Structure and Links</b>	Variable; mostly qualitative;	Relational database for records and reports

## The Right Portfolio for You

- Primary functions
  - Career oriented
  - Learning oriented
  - Institutional assessment oriented
- Niche portfolios
  - Function
  - Author
- Can any one system really do it all?

## What the providers say

- “The clients we look for are people who are genuinely interested in the performance of their students...They also understand the importance of accreditation, can identify what they already do well, and are willing to accept that there are some things that they do not do so well and need to fix for the sake of their students...if you commit to assess, you commit to act.” **Chalk and Wire founder and CEO, Geoff Irvine.**

## Another provider example

- Livetext helps higher education institutions manage and automate accreditation processes. It is a provider of a flexible, multi-faceted accreditation management system for developing, assessing and measuring student learning, offering a suite of tools that addresses six guiding principles for accreditation. **Co-founder Robert Budnik**

## Another Provider Example

- **Digication** is a web-based ePortfolio software company created by two art educators, Jeffrey Yan and Kelly Driscoll. With extensive backgrounds in web application development, user interface design, and digital media, their product and service is highly regarded for ease of use, great-looking, customizable and intuitive interface, and its strong capability to easily store and display complex digital images and video files. Driscoll & Yan also have a strong community building, social-networking, Web 2.0 mindset to steer their product down interesting and highly creative pathways.

## The Balancing Act

- How do we meet institutional and programmatic needs for assessment accountability while not losing the reflective richness and power of individual intellectual journeys?
- Can portfolios be both student owned and institution owned?

## Baylor University's Teacher Candidate Development Portfolio

- Consists of four interrelated components: candidate profile; candidate portfolio, benchmark assessments; formative assessments
- Students create portfolio using HTML tools, retaining individuality & control over look and feel of portfolio
- Faculty review work in portfolio using a scoring rubric and store in separate database for aggregating and reporting
- Designed "in-house"

### Baylor University Example Faculty perspective (2003)

Student ePortfolios appears in this upper window for review

Assessment database appears in lower window

**Student name**

Rubric for assessment ePortfolio

**Standard**

Rating: □1. Developing □2. Nearly Meets □3. Meets □4. Exceeds

## IUPUI ePort

- Evolving to include the following:
  - Personal development profile
  - Individual intellectual journeys
  - Course, program, and institutional outcomes
  - Aggregatable reports for institutional accountability
  - Links to student resumes and applications
- Still under development
- Advancing primarily at the level of individual departments through grants that integrate general education goals with discipline-specific goals.

## English Capstone Matrix

Click on a cell to view/revise

E450 Matrix	My career	My lifelong learning	Who I am as a citizen (of my community, state, country, and/or the world)
My most important PBL	Completed	Ready	Ready
My most important reason for (or outcome of) becoming an English major	Pending	Ready	Ready

Legend

<span style="color: green;">■</span> Ready	<span style="color: blue;">■</span> Completed
<span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Pending	<span style="color: red;">■</span> Locked

## Secondary Education Matrix

Click on a cell to view/revise

Secondary Education EPort	Block I	Block II	Block III	Block IV
PE1 Understanding of Core Knowledge	Ready	Ready	Ready	Ready
PE2 Reflective Practice	Ready	Ready	Ready	Ready
PE3 Teaching to analyze and critique the impact of the Underland	Ready	Ready	Ready	Ready
PE4 Passion for Learning	Ready	Ready	Ready	Ready
PE5 Understanding School in the Context of Society and Culture	Ready	Ready	Ready	Ready
PE6 Professionalism	Ready	Ready	Ready	Ready

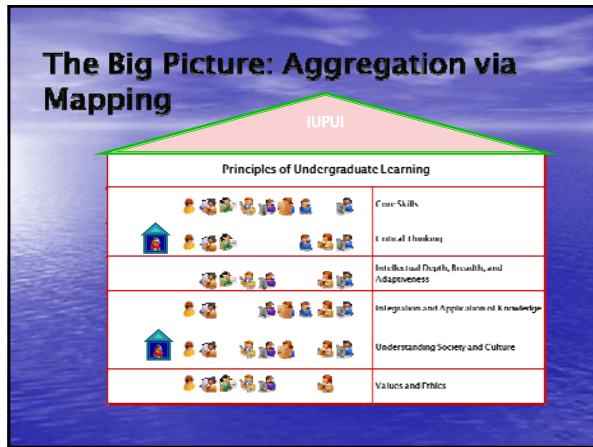
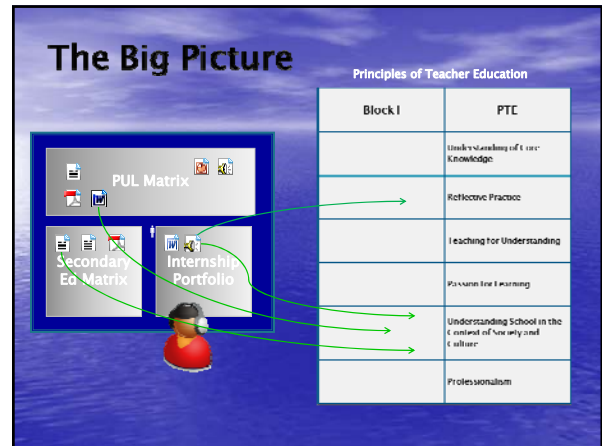
Legend

<span style="color: green;">■</span> Ready	<span style="color: blue;">■</span> Completed
<span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Pending	<span style="color: red;">■</span> Locked

### Some Examples: PUL Matrix

PUL Matrix	Introductory	Intermediate	Advanced	Experiential
Core Communication and Quantitative Skills	Ready	Ready	Ready	Ready
Critical Thinking	Ready	Ready	Ready	Ready
Intellectual Depth, Breadth, and Adaptiveness	Ready	Ready	Ready	Ready
Integration and Application of Knowledge	Ready	Ready	Ready	Ready
Understanding Society and Culture	Ready	Ready	Ready	Ready
Values and Ethics	Ready	Ready	Ready	Ready

Legend  
 Ready (Green)    Completed (Light Blue)  
 Pending (Yellow)    Locked (Red)



### Moving from each student's intellectual journey to the intellectual portrait of an Institution

**Student Portfolio:** owned by student; could include personal profile; curricular and co-curricular evidence of learning; individual assessments; interactions with peers, faculty, community; might selectively link to resume templates or application forms

**Department or Program Portfolio:** Aggregates of student portfolio assessments; database referenced to agreed upon rubrics; could be tied to institutional goals and/or professional accreditation goals.

**Institutional Portfolio:** Aggregates of department and program assessments linked to institutional learning outcomes; reports might be used for multi-institutional assessment of common outcomes

- ### Capitalizing on Opportunity
- Best assessments aim to improve rather than prove (Linda Adler-Kasner)
  - Faculty and assessment leaders have an opportunity to shape the course of higher education assessment
  - ePortfolio developers are eager to adapt technology to meet your articulated needs.

- ### The Ball is in (Y)Our Court
- How do we choose or develop the best ePortfolio system to meet our institutional needs?
  - How do we shape assessment of student learning?
-

## Using this Assessment Institute as our Starting Point

- Presentations
  - Different approaches
  - Questions for presenters
- Exhibitors
  - Different formats and emphases
  - What would YOU like to see developed?
- Networks
  - National Coalition for ePortfolio Research
  - Open Source/Sakai

## Moving from now to the future

- Wayne Gretsky: Skate not to where the puck is, but to where it is going to be
- We have an opportunity to shape the puck's destination.

